

Andrew Jackson to Thomas Jefferson Grotjan, June 9, 1833, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON GROTJAN.¹

¹ Thomas Jefferson Grotjan was a son of Peter A. Grotjan, of Philadelphia. Jefferson wrote the above sentiment at the request of the father, when the son was one year old. In 1833, when Jackson passed through Philadelphia on his way to New England, the father presented himself with the request that Jackson would add something of the same general character below the words of Jefferson. The paper was reproduced in facsimile and the text here given is from one of these reproductions, now in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society.

Philadelphia, June 9, 1833.

“Th: Jefferson to Th: Jefferson Grotjan

“Your affectionate mother requests that I would address to you, as a namesake something which might have a favorable influence on the course of life you have to run. few words are necessary, with good dispositions on your part. Adore God, reverence and cherish your parents, love your neighbor as yourself; and your country more than life. be just, be true, murmur not at the ways of Providence, and the life into which you have entered will be the passage to one of eternal and ineffable bliss. and if to the dead it is permitted to care for the things of this world, every action of your life will be under my regard. farewell,

“ Monticello, Jan. 10, 24.”

Library of Congress

Although requested by Mr. Grotjan, yet I can add nothing to the admirable advice given to his son by that virtuous patriot and enlightened statesman, Thomas Jefferson. The precious relic which he sent to the young child, contains the purest morality, and inculcates the noblest sentiments. I can only recommend a rigid adherence to them. They will carry him through life safely and respectably: and what is far better, they will carry him through death triumphantly; and we may humbly trust they will secure to all, who in principle and practice adopt them, that crown of immortality described in the Holy scriptures.